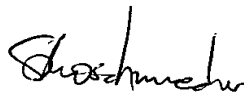


REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are active in the present application. Claims 15-17 are new claims. Support for the new claims is found in the original claims. Claims 1-14 have been amended for clarity and to remove multiple dependencies. No new matter is added. An action on the merits and allowance of claims is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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IN THE TITLE

Please delete the title and replace with the following title:

[PROCESS FOR PRODUCING SCRATCH-RESISTANT WEATHERING-STABLE COATINGS]

--METHOD FOR PRODUCING SCRATCH RESISTANT, WEATHERPROOF COATINGS--

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows.

--1. (Amended) A process for producing a scratch-resistant [coatings] coating,
[which comprises] said process comprising:

applying at least one UV-curable coating composition comprising [as its photochemically crosslinkable constituent] a mixture of at least one aliphatic urethane (meth)acrylate prepolymer PU having at least two double bonds per molecule and having a viscosity in the range from 250 to 11,000 mPa·s, and at least one reactive diluent, to [the] a target substrate to form a wet coating and

curing [the resulting] said wet coating by exposure to ultraviolet radiation under an inert gas atmosphere.

2. (Amended) [A] The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein said UV-curable coating composition further comprises at least one reactive diluent R selected from the group consisting of difunctional [and] esters of acrylic acid, difunctional esters of methacrylic acid,

polyfunctional esters of ~~methacrylic acid, polyfunctional esters of acrylic acid with~~ [acrylic acid, and/or methacrylic acid with] aliphatic diols, [or] ~~aliphatic polyols and mixtures thereof.~~

3. (Amended) [A] The process as claimed in claim 1 [or 2], wherein, based on [the] ~~an~~ overall weight of the coating composition, excluding pigments and fillers, [said] ~~the~~ coating composition comprises:

5 - 90% by weight of at least one aliphatic urethane (meth)acrylate prepolymer PU;

10 - 95% by weight of at least one reactive diluent R;

0.1 - 5% by weight of at least one photoinitiator; and[, if desired,]

optionally 0 - 20% by weight of ~~one or more~~ further reactive diluents, and

optionally 0 - 15% by weight[, preferably 2 - 9% by weight,] ~~of one or more~~ additives [customary for coating compositions].

4. (Amended) [A] ~~The~~ process as claimed in [any of the preceding claims] ~~claim 1~~, wherein [said] ~~the~~ urethane (meth)acrylate prepolymer PU has a number-average molecular weight in the range from 500 to 5000.

5. (Amended) [A] ~~The~~ process as claimed in [any of the preceding claims] ~~claim 1~~, wherein [said] ~~the~~ urethane (meth)acrylate prepolymer PU has a double bond equivalent weight in the range from 250 to 2000[, preferably from 300 to 900 daltons].

6. (Amended) [A] ~~The~~ process as claimed in [any of the preceding claims] ~~claim 1~~, wherein [said] ~~the~~ urethane (meth)acrylate prepolymer PU is [obtainable] ~~obtained~~ by successive reaction of at least 25% of [the] ~~one or more~~ isocyanate groups of a compound (component A) containing ~~one or more~~ isocyanate groups with at least one hydroxyalkyl ester of acrylic acid, [and/or] methacrylic acid [(component B)], ~~or a mixture thereof (component B)~~ and of any remaining free isocyanate groups with at least one further compound

(component C) having at least one functional group which is reactive toward isocyanate groups.

7. (Amended) [A] The process as claimed in claim 6, wherein component A is a prepolymer which contains a plurality of isocyanate groups and has at least two isocyanate groups per molecule, [obtainable] component A obtained by reacting at least one low molecular mass aliphatic diisocyanate or polyisocyanate with a compound having at least two isocyanate-reactive functional groups, [the] a ratio of isocyanate groups to functional groups [being] in the range of from 3:1 to 1:2.

8. (Amended) [A] The process as claimed in claim 6 [or 7], wherein the one or more isocyanate groups of component A have been reacted in a stoichiometric ratio with [the OH] one or more hydroxyl groups of component B.

9. (Amended) [A] The process as claimed in claim 6 [or 7], wherein at least [some] a portion of the free isocyanate groups of the urethane (meth)acrylate prepolymer PU have been reacted with one or more molecules which contain an isocyanate-reactive group and a hydrophilic, stabilizing group.

10. (Amended) [A] The process as claimed in claim 6 [or 7], wherein at least [some] a portion of the free isocyanate groups of the urethane (meth)acrylate prepolymer PU have been reacted with hydroxyalkyl esters of aliphatic dicarboxylic acids, [and/or] alkylamine amides of aliphatic dicarboxylic acids or mixtures thereof, having at least 6 carbon atoms.

11. (Amended) [A] The process as claimed in [any of the preceding claims] claim 1, wherein the coating composition [contains] comprises from 2 [-] to 40% by weight of one or more pigments, based on the overall weight of the coating composition.

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12. (Amended) [A] ~~The~~ process as claimed in [any of the preceding claims] claim 1, wherein the coating composition contains ~~from~~ 1[-] to 30% by weight of one or more fillers, based on the overall weight of the coating composition.

13. (Amended) [A] ~~The~~ process as claimed in [any of the preceding claims] claim 1, wherein the scratch-resistant coating is obtained by [designed as] a multicoat coating [system] process, said multistep coating process comprising the following steps:

- i. applying a [preferably pigmented] basecoat material to a substrate surface;
- ii. drying and/or crosslinking the basecoat film;
- iii. applying a topcoat material[, said topcoat material being a coating composition as defined in any of claims 1 to 12] obtained by the process as claimed in claim 1;
- iv. curing [the] said topcoat material by exposure to UV light under an inert gas atmosphere.

14. (Amended) [A] ~~The~~ process as claimed in [any of the preceding claims] claim 1, wherein the target substrate has a metallic surface.

Claims 15-17 (New).--

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